New York, Columbia University, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Plimpton MS 093

Description: ff. ii + i + 42 + ii - In red morocco, gilt ruled on edges; 5 raised bands on spine, stamped in gold in 2nd, 3rd, and 6th compartments; s. XX#^in#. - Benedictine monastery of St. Sebastian in Ebersberg (ownership note on f. 2 of the UCLA portion of the book; see below). By 1494, the manuscript had left Ebersberg, having been exchanged (according to another note on f. 2) for the price of a "better" book. Orthography of this second note suggests that it was at this point at which the book passed into Spanish ownership; the contents list, s. XVII, on f. 1r-v of the UCLA portion is in Spanish. By 1677, in the collection of Don Pedro Nuñez de Guzman, Marqués de Montealegre; his library acquired by the historian Luis de Salazar y Castro (1658-1734), who in turn bequeathed his immense number of books to the Benedictine monastery of Our Lady of Montserrat in Madrid. At the dissolution of the monasteries, the books were moved from location to location, until arriving at the present home of the bulk of the collection, the Reál Academia de la Historia, in 1850. The modern catalogue of the collection (A. de Vargas-Zúñiga y Montero de Espinosa, Marqués de Siete Iglesias and B. Cuartero y Huerta,Indice de la Colección de Don Luis de Salazar y Castro, Madrid 1949-79, 27:349-351, as L-19) notes that during a shelf-reading done in 1928 only the parchment binding of the manuscript was found. The Marco Polo portion of the manuscript, in its present red morocco binding, was sold by Maggs in 1929 to George A. Plimpton; at his death in July 1936 the manuscript was bequeathed to Columbia University. The UCLA portion was acquired from Lawrence Witten in 1983 in honor of Lynn White, Jr. - De Ricci, p. 1768. This manuscript not cited in: Marco Polo, Il milione, prima edizione integrale, ed. by Luigi Foscolo Benedetto (Florence, L. S. Olschki, 1928), but it is the version discussed by Benedetto on pp. cxix-cxxiv. Marco Polo, The description of the world, translated and annotated by A.C. Moule and Paul Pelliot (London, G. Routledge, 1938) n. 53 as LA6. Consuelo Wager Dutschke, "Francesco Pipino and the manuscripts of Marco Polo's 'Travels'," Ph.D. Dissertation, UCLA 1993.

Number of Parts: 1 - *Number of Images Available:* 4

Direct Link: http://ds.lib.berkeley.edu/PlimptonMS093_20

Language: Latin *Country:* Germany *Century:* 15th

Part 1: ff. 1-42v

Description: - Paper - Ochsenkopfsimilar to Piccard XIII:621 or XIII:622. - 198 x 150 mm - 28-30 long lines frame ruled in ink.

Country: Germany
Cardinal point:
Region: Bavaria
City: Ebersberg
Assigned Date: s. XV^2
Searchable Date Range: 1450 - 1499
Dated by scribe: No
Inscribed Date:
Document: No
Number of Scribes: ;
Script: Cursive bâtarde.
Other Decoration: Plain red 3-line opening initial; other initials 2-line.
Number of Texts: 1

Text 1: ff. 1-40; ff. 40v-42v, blank

Author: Marco Polo

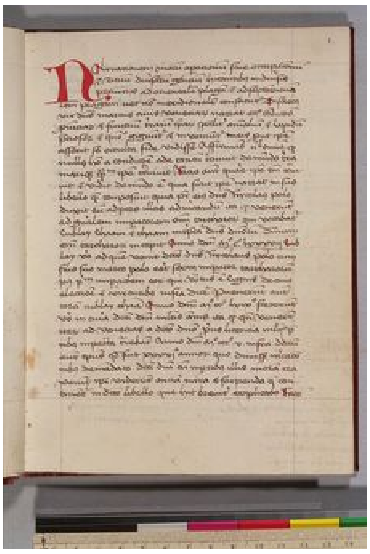
Title: Travels

Language(s): Latin

Incipit: Narracionem morum operacionum sive occupacionum et ritum diversarum gencium habitantibus in diversis provinciis ad orientalem plagam et ad septentrionalem plagam nec non meridionalem constitutis Discretus vir dominus marcus civis veneciarum narrat

Explicit: Est eciam in rostia tanta et tam sempiterna frigiditas quod vix potest ibi vivere homo vel animal. Anno quo supra et cetera 13 kalendas Maii.

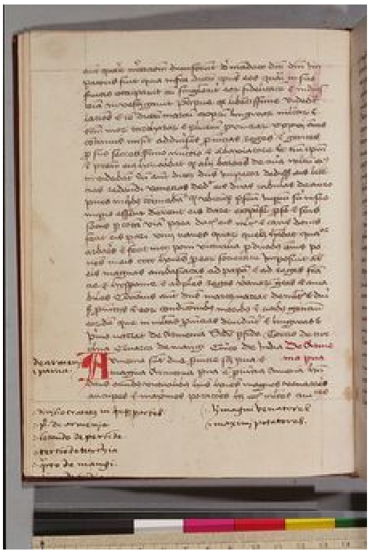
Notes: Marco Polo in the rather mediocre and highly abbreviated Latin text, related, but at a distance, to the main Venetian version; formerly part of the same manuscript as Los Angeles, University of California, University Research Library, 170/584 which contains: f. 3r-v letter of Janos Hunyadi to Matthias, Count of Bistercze (written between 1453-56) regarding conflict with the Turks; ff. 3v-5 letter of Sultan Bayezid to Sixtus IV (1471-1484); ff. 13-74 Ludolph of Suchem; Marco Polo text formerly in this position; ff. 75-81 letter of Prester John, here addressed to the emperor Sigismund; ff. 81v-82v letter of an anonymous theologian to Iacobus de Misa on Hussite practices, here ending unfinished; ff. 84-95 Salomon et Marcolfus in prose and in verse; ff. 95v-96v blank; volume formerly concluded (according to seventeenth century contents list on flyleaf) with "una historia o vida de un hombre sancto llamado Nemo." I thank Paul Meyvaert for suggesting the virtually certain identification of this text: the parodistic story of "Nemo," as excerpted from biblical references to him: "Dies formabuntur et Nemo in eis" (Ps. 138, v. 16), "Nemo ascendit in celum" (John 3:13), "Nemo Deum vidit" (John 1:18), "Deus claudit et Nemo aperit" (Apoc. 3:7) and so forth. Since the modern printed text of Nemo, in the form of a sermon, occupies only some 4 pages, it may be that the few manuscript folios that would have contained the Nemo parody in the present manuscript were simply jettisoned in the re-binding of the texts into the present two volumes.



f. 1 Beginning of the text of Marco Polo, citing three dates: 1187, 1269 and 1305.

View image

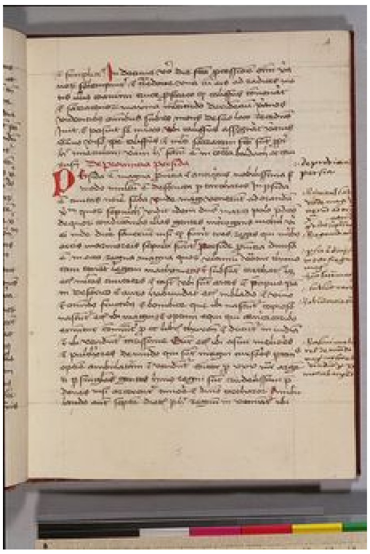
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f. 1v

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f. 4 Reader's notes.

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f. 40 Text dated from exemplar (?), "Anno quo supra et cetera 13 kal. Maii" (there are no dates in the UCLA portion of the manuscript).

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